

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 SSM-03 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 TRSE-00 ACDA-12 /095 W
-----035065 262119Z /75

R 262014Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4770
INFO AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
USMISSION SINAI
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N N I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CAIRO 02996

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EG PINT
SUBJECT: WAFDIST ACTIVITY

REF: CAIRO 544

SUMMARY: MURAD UNANIMOUSLY ELECTED PARLIAMENTARY
LEADER OF WAFD. CLAIMED PARTY WILL GAIN LEGAL STATUS
SOON AND INTENDS CHALLENGE PM SALIM. MURAD CRITICAL
OF U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN PEACE PROCESS, CLAIMING ARMS
SHIPMENTS TO ISRAEL HINDERING SETTLEMENT. THOUGHT
ISRAEL MISSING OPPORTUNITY ACHIEVE SEPARATE AGREEMENT
WITH EGYPT, SOMETHING HE BELIEVES SADAT WOULD ACCEPT.
END SUMMARY.

1. DR. HELMI MURAD, MOST PRESTIGIOUS INDEPENDENT
ELECTED TO PEOPLES ASSEMBLY, INFORMED EMBOFF JAN 25
THAT HE HAS BEEN UNANIMOUSLY ELECTED LEADER OF WAFDIST
PARLIAMENTARIANS, NOW NUMBERING 24. MURAD SAID GOVERN-
MENT HAS UNTIL FEB 5 TO ACT ON WAFD'S PETITION FOR
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LEGALIZATION. SHOULD IT BE TURNED DOWN, WAFD WILL APPEAL
IN COURT AND IS, MURAD ALLOWED, CONFIDENT ITS POSITION
WILL BE UPHELD. MURAD SAID SADAT HAS YET TO GIVE CLEAR
INDICATION HIS INTENTION ON THIS MATTER.

2. PM SALIM, HE SAID, IS JUSTIFIABLY NERVOUS, FEARING
MASS DEFECTIONS FROM HIS CENTER PARTY. MURAD ANTICI-

PATES WAFD PARLIAMENTARIANS WILL GROW TO AT LEAST 80 IMMEDIATELY AFTER LEGALIZATION, THUS MAKING HIM OPPOSITION LEADER. PARTY, HE SAID, WILL SOON CHALLENGE SALIM FOR MAJORITY.

3. MURAD SAID HE HAD APPROACHED CURRENT OPPOSITION LEADER MUSTAFA KAMEL MURAD AND INVITED HIM TO JOIN WAFD TO MAKE HIS OPPOSITION MORE EFFECTIVE. HE INDICATED MUSTAFA KAMEL MURAD WOULD BE OFFERED RANKING POSITION SHOULD HE SWITCH. (SWITCH WOULD HAVE ADDITIONAL BENEFIT FOR WAFD OF GIVING PARTY ACCESS TO MEDIA--LIBERAL PARTY HAS RECENTLY ESTABLISHED WEEKLY JOURNAL WHICH EXPECTED TO GO DAILY SOON.)

4. PEACE PROCESS. ON PEACE PROCESS, MURAD URGED USG TO READ CLOSELY JAN 25 COLUMN IN AKHBAR, BY AHMED ABU AL-FATTAH, WHICH MURAD SAID REPRESENTED "OFFICIAL" WAFD THOUGHT. IN IT, ABU AL-FATTAH QUESTIONED HOW ISRAEL COULD BE EXPECTED EVACUATE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES AT SAME TIME U.S. SHOWERING HER WITH ARMS, THEREBY INCREASING ISRAELI STUBBORNNESS AND INTRANSIGENCE. WRITER ALSO QUESTIONED WHY U.S. HESITATING SUPPLY EGYPT WITH SAME WEAPONS TO CREATE BALANCE IN MIDDLE EAST. NOTING PRESIDENT CARTER'S DECLARATION THAT ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS ILLEGAL, ABU AL-FATTAH POINTED OUT BEGIN HAS YET TO PAY ANY ATTENTION AND WONDERED WHICH STRONGER, ISRAEL OR U.S.?
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AMBIGUITY, COLUMN CONCLUDED, CREATES DEEP CONCERN ON AMERICAN POLICY. IF NEGOTIATIONS CONTINUE IN THIS FASHION "THEY ARE BOUND TO FAIL."

5. EXPANDING ON ARTICLE, MURAD FOUND ISRAELI ATTITUDE "STUPID". ISRAELI LEADERS DO NOT APPEAR RECOGNIZE THAT BILATERAL DEAL IS WITHIN REACH. SADAT WILL ACCEPT THIS SO LONG AS ISRAEL OFFERS HIM ENOUGH ON DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES TO ENABLE SADAT ARGUE THAT HE HAS FOUGHT ARAB BATTLE. ISRAEL, MURAD SAID, NEED NOT WORRY ABOUT IMPLEMENTATION OF SUCH DECLARATION--PALESTINIANS AND SYRIANS ARE "CERTAIN" TO REJECT WHATEVER SADAT ACHIEVES, LEAVING EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT FREE TO NEGOTIATE BILATERAL AGREEMENT.

6. SADAT, MURAD CLAIMED, HAS APPROACHED NEGOTIATIONS NAIVELY AND MADE BASIC MISTAKE IN "LAYING ALL HIS CARDS ON TABLE" AT BEGINNING OF TALKS. INITIALLY, SADAT SHOULD HAVE DEMANDED FAR MORE THAN HE EVER EXPECTED TO ACHIEVE, THUS APPEARING FORTHCOMING IN SUBSEQUENT COMPROMISE. ISRAEL, MURAD OBSERVED, IS PURSUING PRECISELY THIS POLICY AND THIS IS CAUSING SADAT'S FRUSTRATION. SINAI,

HE CONCLUDED, IS MAJOR ISSUE--NO EGYPTIAN LEADER CAN
LEAVE ISRAEL IN OCCUPATION OF ANY PART OF EGYPTIAN
TERRITORY AND SURVIVE. ACCORDING MURAD, PART OF SADAT'S
PROBLEM IS THAT HE HAS SURROUNDED HIMSELF WITH SYCOPHANTS
AND INDIVIDUALS UNABLE TO STAND UP TO PRESIDENT ON POLICY
MATTERS. NONE OF SADAT'S CLOSE ASSOCIATES ARE POLITICIANS
AND ALL ARE DEPENDENT UPON PRESIDENT FOR THEIR JOBS.
NONE WILL TELL SADAT HE IS WRONG.

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C O N N I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 CAIRO 02996

7. COMMENT: MURAD'S SELECTION AS PARLIAMENTARY LEADER
IS INDICATION WAFDISTS TRYING TO OVERCOME ALL POTENTIAL
BARRIERS TO THEIR LEGALIZATION. MURAD HAD NO PREVIOUS
CONNECTION WITH WAFD AND CAN NOT BE DESCRIBED AS "OLD
POLITICIAN." HE WAS SELECTED IN LIEU OF SEVERAL PRO-
MINENT CANDIDATES WHO HAVE LONG HISTORY OF WAFD ASSOCIA-
TION. CHOICE ALSO SUGGESTS OUTLINE OF DEAL THAT UN-
DOUBTEDLY WAS REACHED--MURAD EARLIER TOLD EMBASSY HE HAD
NO INTENTION OF JOINING WAFD. AT ONE POINT, HE WAS
TRYING TO ORGANIZE HIS OWN PARTY. APPEARS THAT MURAD
LED SIZABLE BLOC OF INDEPENDENTS INTO WAFD IN EXCHANGE
FOR PARTY LEADERSHIP. IF WAFD SUCCEEDS IN EFFORT
GAIN LEGAL STATUS, MURAD LIKELY PROVE AN EFFECTIVE
OPPOSITION SPOKESMAN. HE WAS ONE OF FEW FORMER MINISTERS
WHO GAINED REPUTATION OF TALKING BACK TO NASSER. EILTS

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